

4.3.3-1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes businesses near the Project site and assesses whether the implementation and operation of the Project would have long-term adverse impacts on the access to or operation of these businesses. The potential construction-period (temporary) impacts of the Project on local businesses are described in Chapter 4.5, “Construction Effects.”

4.3.3-2 METHODOLOGY

The following data sources were used to identify businesses near the Project site: Letchworth State Park map, Livingston County Real Property Tax Services, and field investigations.

4.3.3-3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

There are few business establishments near the Project site. North of the Project site on the west side of the Genesee River are two: the Glen Iris Inn and the William Pryor Letchworth Museum, both within Letchworth State Park. The Glen Iris Inn has accommodations, including rooms within the historic inn as well as separate cabins; serves meals in its restaurant; and is a popular destination for weddings. The inn and museum are closed during winter months. In addition, there are other commercial activities within Letchworth State Park. These include Balloons Over Letchworth, which provides hot-air balloon rides within and above the Genesee River gorge originating from Middle Falls picnic area near the Glen Iris Inn; white water rafting and canoeing; and horseback, wagon, and sleigh rides.

Access to the inn, museum, and other park activities is from Park Road within Letchworth State Park. Visitors can access Park Road from multiple park entrances, with the closest to the inn and museum being the Castile and Portageville Entrances. Visitors who enter the park from the Portageville Entrance pass beneath the existing Portageville Bridge en route to the inn and museum.

On the east side of the river approximately ¼ mile east of the existing Portageville Bridge is agricultural land and vacant rural land. Access to the agricultural land on the east side of the river is from Portageville Road. Drivers do not pass the Project site to get to the agricultural land. In addition, there are two unpaved roads that cross the Norfolk Southern rail right-of-way east of the Portageville Bridge and within the vacant rural land. One road provides access to the east side of Letchworth State Park for park employees and is not a public entrance. The other road provides private access to the rural land.

The other businesses nearest the Project site are located outside of the park at about a 1-mile drive from the Project site in the hamlet of Portageville. Businesses in Portageville include a gas station and two inns. These businesses are oriented around local roadways.

4.3.3-4 EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

4.3.3-4-1 No Action Alternative

With the No Action Alternative, operations of activities in Letchworth State Park, including events at the Glen Iris Inn, operations of the museum, and Balloons Over Letchworth, would remain unchanged. Visitors to the Glen Iris Inn and the William Pryor Letchworth Museum would continue to enter Letchworth State Park through either the Castile Entrance or the Portageville Entrance. Vehicle access to nearby agricultural land would also be unchanged. Therefore, the No Action Alternative would not adversely impact local businesses.

4.3.3-4-2 Preferred Alternative

With the Preferred Alternative, the existing rail bridge would be replaced at the same height and general location as the existing bridge. This would change the appearance of Upper Falls when viewed from the north, but would not adversely affect park activities, including activities at the Glen Iris Inn, William Pryor Letchworth Museum, or the private commercial activities such as Balloons Over Letchworth that occur in the park. Access to the inn and the museum would be the same as in existing conditions. Access to the agricultural land on the east side of the bridge would also not be affected by the Preferred Alternative. Therefore, businesses near the Project site would not experience adverse impacts with implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

4.3.3-5 SUMMARY OF MITIGATION

No adverse impacts to specific businesses were identified. Therefore, avoidance, minimization, or mitigation is not required.